SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SECURE COMMUNICATIONS WITH NETWORK PRINTERS

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

5   A system and method are provided for secure communications to a network-connected printer. The method comprises: receiving documents encrypted with a public key; spooling the encrypted documents into a printer memory; accepting a private key corresponding to the public key used to encrypt the documents;

10   in response to accepting the private key, generating a list of documents encrypted with a corresponding public key; creating a graphical user interface (GUI) dialog box to invoke the selection of an encrypted document; decrypting the documents with the private key; and, printing the decrypted documents in response to selecting a

15   document. The printer has a card reader to read code from SMART cards, and accepting a private key includes using the code read by the card reader as the private key. Alternately, the printer has a keyboard interface to accept an alpha-numeric code. Then, the method further comprises: storing the private keys in the printer;

20   creating a table in the printer to cross-reference private keys with alpha-numeric codes. Then, the private key referenced by the entered alpha-numeric code is used.